



AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES CORNER

ISSUE I DECEMBER 2014



Ambassador's Message:

Welcome to the first issue of the Pristina American Citizen Services Corner Newsletter!

U.S. Embassy Pristina is now providing all types of American Citizen Services. U.S. citizens can now renew a passport, obtain notary services, or report the birth of a child abroad directly in the Pristina Consular Section. This newsletter provides information about how to prepare for your appointment, apply, and ensure safe travels.

The U.S. State Department provides an opportunity for you to receive important messages and travel warnings via email and cell phone when you enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Plan ([STEP](#)). I encourage U.S. citizens who have not done so already to register for STEP. This program plays an important role in keeping U.S. citizens traveling abroad safe and informed.

We are committed to ensuring that any personal information received by our overseas embassies and consulates pursuant to the [STEP](#) process, whether in person or otherwise, is safeguarded against un-authorized disclosure. The data that you provided the U.S. Department of State is subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act (5 USC 552a). This means that the U.S. Department of State will not disclose the information you provide us in your STEP application to any third parties unless you have given us written authorization to do so, or unless the disclosure is otherwise permitted by the Privacy Act.

In this edition of the newsletter you will find information regarding information for filing U.S. federal and state income taxes and a holiday travel reminder. You may also wish to review the [Traveler's Checklist](#) while preparing for future trips.

Happy Holidays from my colleagues and me at the U.S. Embassy Pristina!

Sincerely,

Ambassador Tracey Ann Jacobson

To contact the
Consular section
during business hours

Email:
ConsularPristina@state.gov

Call:
0 38-5959-3119

For after-hours
Emergencies call
0 38-5959-3000

Routine ACS Services Now Available In Pristina

American Citizen Services are available by appointment only. Arrive a few minutes before your appointment to allow time to go through security.

ACS appointments must be made using our website:

http://pristina.usembassy.gov/acs_appointment_form.html

Please read and follow the instructions for the service you need:

- [Passport instructions](#)
- [Extra pages instructions](#)
- [Consular Report of Birth Abroad](#) for child born in Kosovo to U.S. citizen parent (at the time of birth).
- [Notarial Instructions](#) for documents to be used in the United States.

All applicants must bring their confirmation page at the time of appointment and follow all security screening rules. Please see additional information on our website about prohibited items.

The Library of Congress presents



Discover the stories of America's past, like Buffalo Bill and Harriet Tubman; find out about interesting inventions and get fascinating historical facts.
From <http://www.americaslibrary.gov/>



The Federal government's official job list. Shown are employment search, information center, veteran information and forms.
From www.usajobs.gov



The official benefits website of the U.S. government. Informs citizens of benefits they may be eligible for. Provides information on how to apply for assistance.

From www.benefits.gov



Holiday Traveling Checklist

Winter break is just around the corner and many families will be taking advantage to explore new places in the region and around the world. You don't want bumps in the road to spoil your plans. Make sure your travel documents are in order and that you are well informed.

If the answer to the following questions are "yes", then you are off to a good start. If not, then it might be time to make an [appointment](#) with us.

Do you have a valid passport?

Make sure you have a signed, valid passport, and a visa, if required, and fill in (in pencil) the emergency information page of your passport. It's a good idea to keep a copy of your passport data page with you while traveling.

Does your passport have a minimum of 6 months validity?

Check your passport expiration date. To enter, many countries require travelers to have at least 6 months validity on their passports beyond their planned duration of stay. If your passport expires in six months or less you need to renew it now. Don't wait until the last minute; the Minimum processing time for passport applications is 10 workdays. For complete information on how to renew a passport please visit our [website](#).

Does your passport have sufficient visa pages?

Check your passport to make sure you are not about to run out of pages for visas and entry/exit stamps. If your passport has at least one year validity and is in good condition, but you are running out of visa pages, then you can apply for extra visa pages to be added. Keep in mind that the Embassy may only add the extra pages 2 times and only in the old style passports without a chip. For more information visit our [website](#).



Are you are well informed about the local conditions and laws of the places you will be visiting?

Remember that while in a foreign country you are subject to its laws. [Look up Country Specific Information](#) about the places you plan to visit, as well as [Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts](#). In addition, make sure to check with the embassies of your destination countries for information on prohibited items.

Have you enrolled in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)?

Sign up for the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. It's easy and it's free! Doing so will help your family and friends get in touch with you in case of an emergency and the U.S. Embassy or Consulate con-tact you in case of a crisis in the places you visit.

Are your friends or relatives aware of your travel plans?

Leave copies of your itinerary, passport data page and visas with family or friends, so you can be contacted in case of an emergency. In addition, check out the Department of State's webpage on [Tips for Travelling Abroad](#).



Parents' Corner

Applying and renewing your children's passports is simple but there are some things you need to be aware of before you begin the process.

What you need to apply

A completed [DS-11 form](#)

One 2"x2" passport photo

Evidence of child's U.S. citizenship

Evidence of relationship between child and parent(s)/guardian(s)

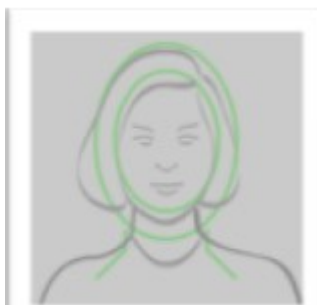
Parent(s) or guardian(s) identification and photocopy of identification

Provide parental consent

Pay applicable fee

Follow instructions for completing forms and supporting evidence on our [website](#)

Schedule an appointment [online](#)



- 1) You will need one 2"x2" photo of your child
- 2) Parents cannot appear in the photo with their child*
- 3) Visit the [photograph requirements page](#)

***Tips for taking pictures of your baby—Lay your baby on his or her back on a plain white or off-white sheet. This will ensure your baby's head is supported and provide a plain background for the photo. Make certain there are no shadows on your baby's face, especially if you take a picture from above with the baby lying down. You can also cover a car seat with a plain white or off-white sheet and take a picture of your child in the car seat. This will also ensure your baby's head is supported.**

Children's Passport Issuance Alert Program

The [Children's Passport Issuance Alert Program](#) (CPIAP) is one of the Department's most important tools for preventing international parental child abduction. The program allows parents to register their U.S. citizen children under the age of 18 in the Department's Passport Lookout System. If a passport application is submitted for a child who is registered in CPIAP, the Department contacts and alerts the parent or parents.

[Download and print a free children's activity book](#)

Information for Travelers

The number one mission of the Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA) is to protect the lives and safety of U.S. citizens traveling or living overseas.

International travel can be educational, uplifting, and empowering. The Department of State enthusiastically supports U.S. citizens exploring the world and we have resources to help you do so safely.

There are specific planning steps you can take to enjoy your trip, and be safe. When traveling overseas, remember to take the same precautions as if you were traveling in the United States. As a U.S. citizen traveling in a foreign country, you may already stand out: use discretion when moving from place to place; be aware of your surroundings; and be cautious when sharing information about your plans and itinerary with strangers. It is equally important for all travelers to understand the cultural norms of the country they will be visiting. Pay attention to local laws and customs, as they can be quite different than in the United States -- especially if you intend to travel alone.

Research information about where you are going *before you go* and think about how you will be traveling. **Look up the address and emergency contact number of the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate and carry it with you at all times. You can find the contact information for all U.S. embassies and consulates [here](#).** We have duty officers available 24/7 to assist U.S. citizens who have emergencies or who are victims of crime.

Are you traveling alone?

If so, who knows where you will be? You can let the Embassy know your travel plans by enrolling in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#). STEP allows U.S. citizens traveling or residing abroad to get routine and emergency information from the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Enrollment can also help the U.S. embassy or consulate nearest you to help you in an emergency. Be sure to update your STEP profile to reflect your in-country contact number if you have one. Check out our [Country Specific Information](#), available for every country in the world, for information on a variety of matters about the country you will be visiting. The Special Circumstances section for each country will contain any relevant information about attitudes, local laws, and customs.

How will you get around?

The safety of public transportation varies from country to country. In many places, informal taxis or mini-buses pose undue threats to people unfamiliar with the local conditions, especially women traveling alone. Find out what is safe and what is not before you go. Our [Country Specific Information](#) will give guidance on avoiding unsafe transport.

Are you planning to reside abroad?

If [residing abroad](#), understand what that means for you and your family. All U.S. citizens overseas, whether traveling or residing abroad, are subject to the criminal and civil laws of that country.

What should you do if you run into problems or are a victim of crime while overseas?

The American Citizens Services Section of the U.S. embassy or consulate may be able to help you, especially if you feel you can't approach the local police or encounter difficulties with local authorities. The State Department is committed to assisting U.S. citizens who become victims of crime while traveling abroad. Consular staff at our embassies and consulates can provide information about the country's criminal justice system, including how to file a police report or access medical services, as well as information about other available resources. Please visit our [U.S. Citizens Victims of Crime](#) webpage for more information.

Can the U.S. Embassy help me with my U.S. taxes?

No. Regrettably, we cannot help you with your taxes. **There is no IRS office or IRS representative at the U.S. Embassy in Pristina.** Our consular staff does not have the ability to provide answers to specific questions about income taxes.

For immediate assistance from a taxpayer specialist, you can call, fax or email the **International Customer Service Site** located in Philadelphia. The Service Site is open Monday through Friday, for 17 hours each day, from 6:00 AM to 11 PM, Eastern Time. Their contact information is as follows:

Telephone: (267) 941-1000
Fax: (267) 941-1055

U.S. citizens and residents must report their worldwide income on their federal income tax returns. Living or earning income outside the United States does not relieve a U.S. citizen of the responsibility for filing tax returns. However, U.S. citizens living and/or working abroad may be entitled to various deductions,

exclusions, and credits. ACS provides a limited supply of federal tax forms. For basic tax information for U.S. citizens overseas, please visit [U.S. Citizens and Resident Aliens Abroad](#) page of the Internal Revenue Service. For more information on general U.S. tax issues, please consult the [IRS web site](#).

U.S. State Tax Information

The U.S. Citizen Services does not have State tax forms. For your convenience, we list the states' tax web sites below.

[Alabama](#) | [Alaska](#) | [Arizona](#) | [Arkansas](#) | [California](#) | [Colorado](#) | [Connecticut](#) | [Delaware](#) | [District of Columbia](#) | [Florida](#) | [Georgia](#) | [Hawaii](#) | [Idaho](#) | [Illinois](#) | [Indiana](#) | [Iowa](#) | [Kansas](#) | [Kentucky](#) | [Louisiana](#) | [Maine](#) | [Maryland](#) | [Massachusetts](#) | [Michigan](#) | [Minnesota](#) | [Mississippi](#) | [Missouri](#) | [Montana](#) | [Nebraska](#) | [Nevada](#) | [New Hampshire](#) | [New Jersey](#) | [New Mexico](#) | [New York](#) | [North Carolina](#) | [North Dakota](#) | [Ohio](#) | [Oklahoma](#) | [Oregon](#) | [Pennsylvania](#) | [Puerto Rico](#) | [Rhode Island](#) | [South Carolina](#) | [South Dakota](#) | [Tennessee](#) | [Texas](#) | [Utah](#) | [Vermont](#) | [Virginia](#) | [Washington](#) | [West Virginia](#) | [Wisconsin](#) | [Wyoming](#)

Important IRS and Tax Information Resources:

[Tax Fraud & Abuse](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Reporting Phishing](#)

[Identity Theft](#)

[No FEAR Act](#)

[Accessibility](#)



Questions?
The Interactive Tax Assistant can help

Get a Response to Your Tax Question >

LOCAL UNITED STATES CITIZEN SKILLS/RESOURCES SURVEY

U.S. citizens abroad may possess critical skills and resources invaluable for helping other U.S. citizens in a time of crisis. The Consular Section in Pristina would appreciate your assistance in identifying these skills and resources.

If you are interested in contributing information to the Consular “Skills Bank” please complete this survey and email a copy to

consularpristina@state.gov.

We will keep your responses confidential.

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/128210.pdf>



Leaving Kosovo?

If you are departing Kosovo and have been enrolled in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program ([STEP](#)), please do not forget to end your enrollment when you leave.

If you previously enrolled online, you can end your enrollment by visiting <https://step.state.gov/step/>.



If you previously submitted a paper registration form at the U.S. Embassy Consular section in Pristina, you may unsubscribe yourself by sending an email request to close your enrollment with the Embassy at:

consularpristina@state.gov

American Corners in Kosovo



American Corners in Kosovo are jointly sponsored partnerships between the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy Pristina and local libraries. American Corners promote mutual understanding between the people of Kosovo and the people of the United States. Our three American Corners are located in Pristina, Prizren and Mitrovica (north).

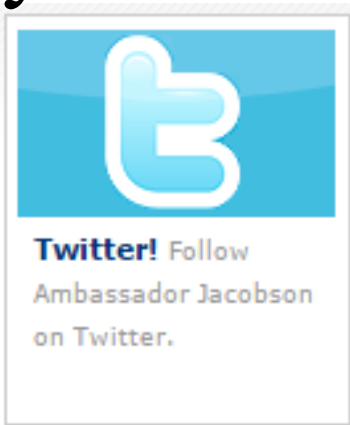
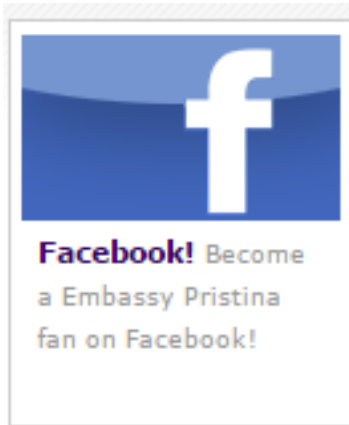
What they offer:

- Diverse programs and events from English language learning, exhibitions, discussions to business, skill building and fund programs
- A monthly calendar of events. Check out their facebook pages to get the most updated calendar
- A wide range of book collection for adults and children
- U.S. related films on DVDs from different genres
- U.S. Magazines, including the Economist, Rolling Stones, Entertainment, National Geographic, ...and the list goes on!
- Kindles with several titles on it in various subject areas, such as American Literature for kids and adults, autobiographies, U.S. History, media, etc. And the possibility to request new e-book titles!
- Public access computers
- Reference and educational resources
- A wide range of e-resources available through eLibraryUSA portal, including databases such as:
 - eLibrary with over 20,000 ebooks in English and 35,000 books in Spanish and Portuguese
 - Academic OneFile with over 42 million journal articles
 - BookFlix for early and reluctant readers of English Language, with a collection of 95 fictional video storybooks
 - Business Source Premier with over 2,300 journal titles
 - CQ Researcher Online covering current and controversial issues in the United States
 - Filmakers Library Online containing over 1,000 full documentaries
 - Literature Resource Center, which provides full text academic articles and book reviews, and more
- For a full list of databases see <http://elibraryusa.state.gov/resources.html> . You can access these databases from home at no charge once you become registered members at one of the American Corners.
- They provide space to discuss and meet, and
- A place where you can volunteer

Location and Contact Information:

- American Corner Pristina.** This Corner is located in the ground floor of the National Library of Kosovo. Contact at: Tel +381 38 212 206; email: acpristina@yahoo.com; facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acpristina>
- American Corner Prizren.** This Corner is located in the top floor of the Inter-Municipal Library in Prizren, close to the Turkish Hammam in Prizren. Contact at: Tel: +381 29 631 636; email: americancornerprizren@yahoo.com; facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acprizren>
- American Corner Mitrovica.** This Corner is located in the first floor of Vuk Karadzic public library in the northern part of Mitrovica. Tel: +381 38 28 423 872; email: acmitrovica@yahoo.com; facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acmitrovica>.

Stay Connected!



Click [here](#) to view U.S. Department of State videos and [here](#) to view U.S. Embassy Pristina videos



Important Security Announcement

Electronic devices, large bags, weapons, and glass bottles are not allowed within the Embassy grounds. Visitors who do not follow these instructions will experience considerable delays at the security check point, which may result in the appointment being cancelled. There are no storage facilities on the facility.

Follow Us on Social Media



<http://twitter.com/TravelGov>

<https://www.facebook.com/travelgov>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/statephotos>

<http://blogs.state.gov/>

http://www.travel.state.gov/news/news_3162.html

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/rls/dos/165020.htm>

<https://step.state.gov/step/>